

Our granddaughter, West Ann Tarricone, suffers from severely disabling epilepsy. The first seizures came when West was 10 months old. At 11 months of age, she was diagnosed with West Syndrome. Just as West was emerging in childhood, epilepsy took her from us. As her twin brother Blake grew and mastered milestones, West struggled.

In her short life, West has taken over 14 pharmaceutical medications and tried palliative treatments, several of which nearly killed her. Daily, West also relies on two different rescue drugs, which her parents carry always; Even a 4-minute trip to Blake's bus stop requires that they be prepared to rescue West's life with emergency medication in the event that she stops breathing or experiences other physical failures during acute seizures.

West has 1000's of seizures a day: myoclonics, absence, tonic and tonic clonics. None of the pharmaceutical drugs she was prescribed offers a cure for her epilepsy. None of these allow West to live free of epilepsy for periods of time that benefit her growth. Even with pharmaceutical intervention, West still requires daily "one-to-one" at school, to keep track of her seizures and to provide for vast developmental needs caused by her seizures. Additionally, West's school maintains two licensed nurses on staff who administer rescue medications for her when necessary. Because of the epilepsy, nothing can be left to chance with regard to her day, whether the seizures themselves or the residual environmental risks accompanying them, and this is while she takes presently available, prescribed drugs.

West has been on every available medication for seizures, to no avail. It is time she have safe access—with her doctor's approval—to receive prescription marijuana. With this medically safe treatment, West's seizures can be dramatically reduced. And, with the correct cannabis rescue medication, West can stop taking heavy doses of valiums and benzos, which further traumatize her body. Her present rescue medications can reduce a grand mal (aka tonic clonic) but does not make seizures "go away." Research in other states has shown that with a proper medical cannabis rescue prescription our grandchild could not only stop the seizures more quickly (30-120 seconds), they could quite possibly "go away." This lovely child could get back to living her life; perhaps West could even experience the same milestones her brother, Blake, has experienced. Please consider allowing this vitally important treatment for our granddaughter and the hundreds of other children like her.

Sincerely,

John and Lyn Johnson